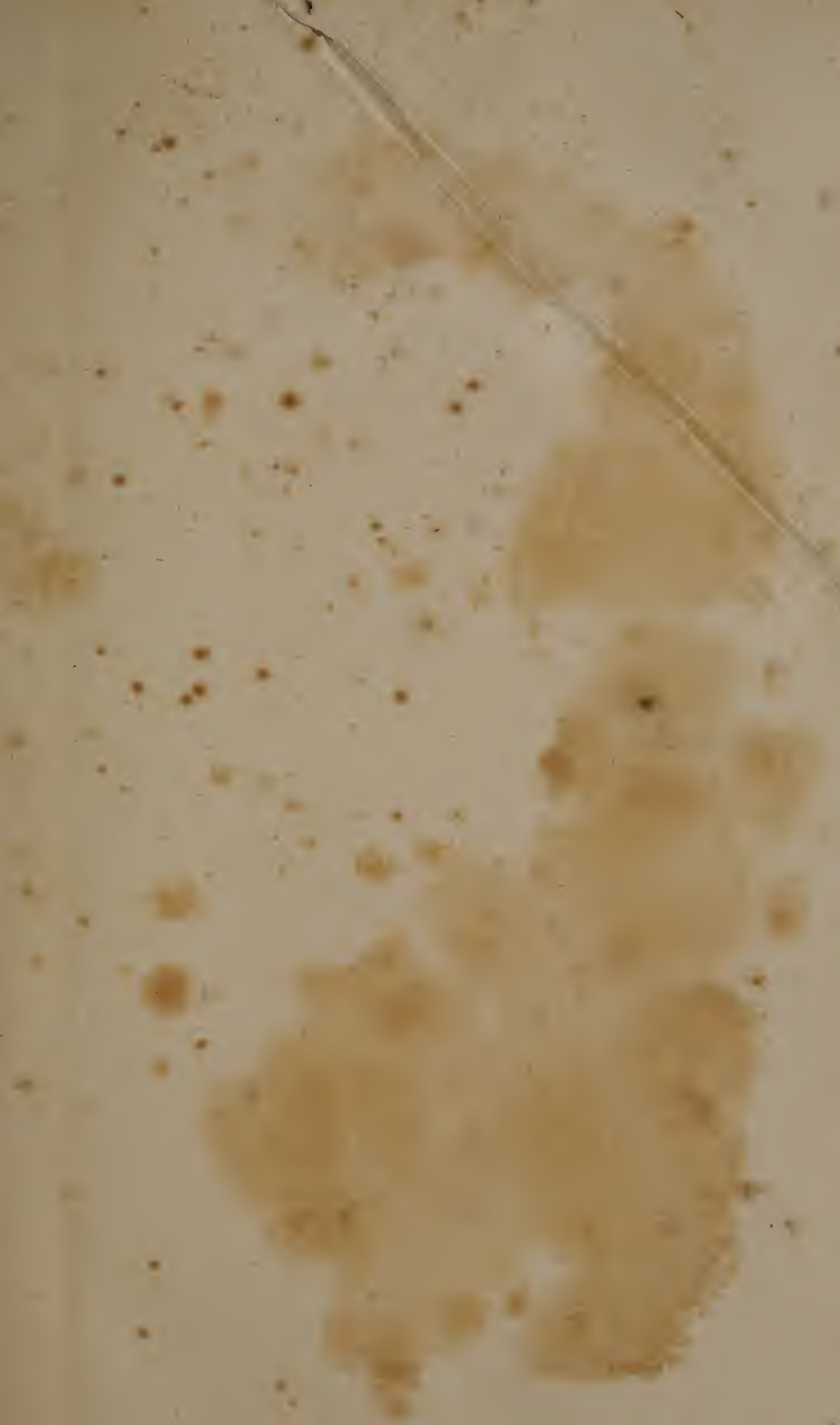




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LETTER

TO

THE QUEEN.

1870
1871

LETTER
TO
THE QUEEN
ON
THE STATE OF THE MONARCHY.

BY A FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE.

*Attributed to St Bringham
but I believe denied by him*

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LETTER TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

THIS letter is addressed to you, rather than to any of your servants, for two reasons. It is intended to convey instruction to your people; and there is no name among those of your ministers which could ensure its contents any attention, by being placed in its front. It is intended to convey to yourself the knowledge of some truths, which may be more wholesome than palatable; and those whigs, who have been carefully placed around you, in every possible direction, by the remains of the whig party, may not have the courage to keep from your eyes a paper bearing your superscription; although some leaders of their faction had the audacity to tell you they had gained a victory in the House of Lords last session, when they were signally overthrown, and as far disgraced as it was possible for men to be, who had so lately surrendered all the principles on which they took office, for the chance of continuing yet a while to hold it.

If they shall not dare to withhold this letter, they will assuredly represent it as disrespectful. The substance of it will be described as uncourtly; because plain truths are rarely inmates of court circles. The

manner of it will be treated as rough ; because, for the sake of clearness and conciseness, circumlocutions, always unmeaning and now ridiculous, are avoided. But be you well assured, that he who treats you as a rational being, and speaks to you as the most really illustrious persons of both sexes in your dominions are addressed,—who uses no other kind of phrase than is applied to the greatest of your warriors, the wisest of your statesmen, the fairest of your countrywomen, by those who most venerate the one or admire the other,—treats you with as much respect as any mortal ever can receive from the children of men. I acknowledge you as my sovereign. I am an experienced man, well stricken in years. I bend myself respectfully before *you*, a girl of eighteen, who, in my own or any other family in Europe, would be treated as a child, ordered to do as was most agreeable or convenient to others,—whose inclinations would never be consulted,—whose opinion would never be thought of,—whose consent would never be asked upon any one thing appertaining to any other human being but yourself, beyond the choice of a gown or a cap, nor always upon that :—yet before you I humble myself, as one anxious to conciliate your favour to my principles, to gain your approval of my opinions. I sit down to write a letter intended for your perusal in the first instance, and I acknowledge that your agreeing or differing with me upon its subject-matter may have the greatest influence upon the destinies of four-and-twenty millions of people. I pass over all the soldiers and the councillors by whom your throne is surrounded, all the holy prelates who minister at your altars, all the learned

judges who distribute justice to your people in your name ; and I lay at the feet of one just emerging from childhood, wholly without practice of government, absolutely without experience of mankind, utterly ignorant of all or almost all the things that go to accomplish a ruler of the people, those opinions, the result of a long life of political observation, no little political experience, and a diligent study continued above half a century of the most eventful period in the whole history of our species. Is not *this* sufficiently respectful ? Does not *this* show deference enough for your station ; or, if your courtiers will have it so, for your person ? Having surrendered the substance of pride, and come really down from the superiority which not I alone, but any individual who has lived so much longer than you have, must needs possess over you, in all that constitutes practical wisdom ; surely it avails but little to squabble about the shadowy formalities of our relative position ; and I may well be suffered to consult my own convenience in seeking relief from trammels that must sit uneasy on one to whom they are unusual.

But I have already almost unawares broached one of the subjects upon which it is my duty to speak plainly, and yours to reflect deeply. Royalty has never before been exposed to so severe a trial. Yes, Madam, the monarchical principle is exposed to a new and a rude trial of its strength in your person. Never since those early times when the transition was made from the patriarchal government of the tribe's father, to the rule of a single chief, sustained on his throne by main force, never have the strength and stamina of kingly

power been exposed to any thing even approaching the severity of the process which its virtue is now undergoing—suffer me rather to say, now about to undergo. For hitherto, the novelty of a young woman called to exercise such mighty functions, the curiosity excited by your personal qualities being wholly unknown, the interest roused by the attachment felt for your excellent mother, the confidence reposed in the effects of the good education you received from her, have all contributed to make the country forget the extraordinary position in which your accession has placed it; and to lay asleep all the doubts and scruples as to our form of government which are the natural growth of so unheard-of a conjunction.

Nor let any one here take the trouble of reminding me, that children have aforesaid held, or been supposed to hold, the sceptre, both in France and in England. Yes, they were suffered to hold it with fingers too tiny even to grasp its narrow end; and no man, in those days, ever thought of questioning whether some more rational form of polity were not more fitted for rational beings. But do we live in times when, as in Louis XIV.'s case, the infant monarch, yet unendowed with reason, and incapable even of speech, could be shown before his council, as consenting to the appointment of a regent and guardian of his realm? or when, as in our Sixth Harry's instance, a slaving idiot could be called upon to satisfy the "longing desire of his faithful commons," by making a sign that he heard their prayer? It is fit that you and those about you should recollect, that long since these regal times, have come the republican

times of England and of France—when all monarchy was trampled under foot—when the imprescriptible right of men to govern themselves, whenever they are qualified for administering their own affairs, was proclaimed to a consenting world ; nay, when, for a while at least, that period was anticipated in both countries, and a commonwealth established somewhat sooner than the people were prepared to exercise their full share of political power. Since even the more recent of these great, and, for the reason just given, unsuccessful experiments was made, we have seen improvements proceeding with the strides of a giant, in Europe as well as in America ; and we have also found that, with a thing so excellent as a giant's strength, men have learned the wise and the humane lesson, how tyrannous it is to use it like a giant. Nevertheless, the power is acquired. On the western side of the Atlantic, it is exerted without control ; and it is your fate to have the experiment tried in your person, how far a monarchy can stand secure in the nineteenth century, when all the powers of the executive government are intrusted to a woman, and that woman a child.

From what has been premised, you will at once perceive that matters, personal to you, form no part of my subject. I have higher things, and more mighty interests in my view, than any of those questions which keep your courtiers and your ministers on the alert, and in anxious inquiry, “ from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.” I care not a straw to what men you may most probably give your confidence, on what women bestow your favours ; when you may

choose to be married, or whom to marry ; how far your habits may resemble the business-like propensities of your father and the late king, or the pampered indolent ones of George IV. ; if you are likely to be extravagant or parsimonious, to consult Belgian or English friends ; or apt to spoil your mother by your indulgence, or to become jealous of some new Duke of Cornwall's natural alliance with the enemies of your government. All these questions I shall leave to occupy those whom they can interest, and be discussed by such as can resolve them. They may occupy party intriguers—they may be understood by habitual courtiers. To those who are looking abroad upon the destiny of their country, and who only regard kings as the office-bearers of the nation, maintained and supported for its benefit, they have no attractions which can detain them a moment from far other topics. Of these, the present condition of the monarchy decisively claims the foremost place.

One question, I will venture to affirm, has been asked a million of times in the course of the last twelve months. It is this :

Our constitution being a mixed monarchy, does this really mean an aristocracy or a commonwealth ? or, if you please, an aristocratic commonwealth, in which the nobles or the people alone are to rule ; or is it a government in which the sovereign as well as they has an effective voice ? In other words, is the king a mere figure of speech, to represent the executive powers, as the crown is a figure for the king ? and can the whole functions of the constitution be performed by the monarch's name being used in accordance with the will of

the two Houses of Parliament? Or does not our system assume, as one of its foundations, that besides the voice of the Lords and Commons, a deliberative and independent discretion in the selection of ministers, and in the choice of measures, shall be exercised also by the sovereign? Is the king a mere cipher, or a significant figure, in our polity?

That this question has been oftener put than answered, is very certain. But as it has latterly been put a vast deal more frequently than at and soon after your accession, so has it been far oftener answered; and, by all but a few speculative republicans, answered in one way, that way being an affirmance of the real and substantial authority vested in the king. A year has made great changes in the feelings of exuberant loyalty and unmeaning affection which greeted you on your first public appearance,—feelings which, if they were sincere, and meant any thing more than curiosity, did the people little credit; for what possible claim to national gratitude, or to public confidence, could you possess, when you had never rendered a single public service, except by surviving the Princess Charlotte, nor been tried or known in any one particular, except that nothing unfavourable to you had ever transpired? But the folly of this general excitement has been outstripped by the gross injustice which has followed; and, as you were popular without having done a single thing to gain the esteem of the people, so you are become unpopular without having done any one thing to forfeit their favour. The people have shown a kind of waywardness by no means unusual; and having awoke from

the trance of loyalty that had come over their senses, they are vexed at having let them be overpowered, and are out of sorts with you, instead of being ashamed of themselves. However, the fact is undeniable ; and without the frail protection of that ephemeral favour which followed you last year, your authority, and the monarchy of which it is parcel, are about to undergo a scrutiny the most rigorous and unsparing that ever sifted any human institution.

Am I apprehensive for its ultimate fate ? Friendly to this form of government, and believing it to be better suited, at least to our present condition, than a republic, do I feel alarmed lest it should be overthrown ? I answer the question, though with much hesitation and some difficulty, upon the whole, in the negative ; because I think that the people of this country are, generally speaking, favourable to monarchy ; and that the republican party is, in point of numbers, not a majority ; in point of weight from property, rank, and capacity, a most inconsiderable minority indeed.

But if such, every thing considered, is my hope, and even my expectation, I cannot conceal from myself how favourable the crisis must prove to the ventilation of violent opinions, the progress of extreme principles. I see no barrier, in those who now surround you, to any inroads which any class of politicians may attempt upon our institutions. I perceive the most manifest increase in the prevalence of even pure republican doctrines. I know that the favourite occupation of the community at large, is, to dwell upon the anomalies of kingly government, and to count its cost ; while no pains

whatever are taken to recommend it, or to meet the coming storm, by propping up the regal fabric with popular supports. On the contrary, the line is drawn deeper and broader than ever between the few and the many; between the few who are to share in the administration of our affairs, and the many who are to be for ever excluded from all participation in it. Nor can I bring myself to regard the property qualification, by which this line of separation is traced, as in the least degree calculated to make the existing state of things more safe or more natural; unless I can also bring myself to believe that the arrangement which shuts the door against the million, is the better or the wiser for putting all property in the same jeopardy with all power, by reminding the great body of the people that they are disfranchised because they are poor.

If, Madam, the parliamentary constitution of this country had remained of the same construction as of old, or rather of the shape which it had gradually assumed, and which it presented to the eye of the political philosopher as well as the multitude, before the great events of 1831 and 1832, the case would have been different indeed. In those days, to which we now look back as to the former periods of our history, the principle of representation seems hardly to have been recognised. The great object of the political arrangement was to provide a set of men, more or less able, to join with the Crown and the aristocracy in making laws and carrying on the government of the country. In the selection of those persons to fill the office of a third estate, little regard was paid to the choice of the country, though

they were to play the part of representing it. The plan of our political structure required commons as well as king and lords. But, so there were commons, it signified little how they might be made. The affairs of the state were deemed safer in the hands of the other two branches, which had a permanent existence. So, in the operation of choosing who should represent them, the people were very little consulted; the Crown and the nobility very much. A long course of bad government, which had loaded the country with debt, and bent her down to the very ground under a load of taxes, gradually opened the eyes of the community to the necessity of a change; and the rapid improvement of all classes in knowledge, and especially in political information, made it quite clear that so preposterous a system could no longer be maintained, as that which, under the name of representative government, only established an aristocratic monarchy, excluding the people from the nomination of those who were to speak in their name and act in their behalf, and establishing the Lords in the supreme management of the public affairs; sitting themselves in one chamber of real Peers, and filling with their delegates another chamber of mock Commons. The great advocates of this arrangement, who could see in it nothing but the perfection of human wisdom, were the Duke of Wellington, and other leaders of the present opposition; Lord Melbourne, and other leading members of your Majesty's Government. Both were equally enemies to all real reform; but they differed in their plan of hostility. The Duke and his men openly and honestly resisted every proposi-

tion for the disfranchisement of even the most corrupt borough ; and would not hear of transferring the franchise, most scandalously abused, to the largest and wealthiest manufacturing towns. The Viscount, who had then no men of his own, but was a follower of Mr. Huskisson and Lord Dudley, was friendly to the more unfair and insidious manœuvre of granting a very little bit indeed,—just enough to swear by ; merely the substituting Manchester for East Retford ; in order to resist with the more effect the consummation equally dreaded by both these classes of politicians,—the fearful consummation which should restore the people to their rights. Both the Duke's party and the remnant of Mr. Canning's party foresaw the tide that approached. The former gallantly stood up, resolved to try their strength against its surge ; the latter, more wary in their generation, turned their backs and ducked down, in the hopes of the wave passing over them and leaving them unscathed. The Duke's men were swept away ; the Canning men, by a sudden change of measures, contrived to get upon the flood, and it carried them into port ; where they must for some little time have found themselves in strange company, among men, like Lord Grey, all whose lives had been spent in supporting reform. In port, however, they were ; and in a port which those good gentlemen never willingly quit, to fare forth on any wild adventure of principle or public character, or any romantic voyage of discovery in quest of the *terra incognita* of political consistency. So, they remained in Downing Street while the revolution of 1831-2 was effected, and were themselves active work-

men in the grand operation by which the whole parliamentary constitution of these realms was placed upon an entirely new foundation ; quite as much as if it had been taken to pieces, pulled down, and built up again ; with but a few bricks and beams (forty-shilling freeholds and votes of freemen) that had formed any part of the old edifice.

This great and bloodless change, the most important alteration by far that our form of government ever suffered, the largest indeed that any country ever underwent without violence, was effected while you, Madam, were yet in the nursery ; and it was the fashion of the courtiers at Kensington to congratulate your royal mother upon all the storm being well blown over, long before it became your lot to fill the throne ; a feeling much more natural than sagacious. For, assuredly the most turbulent and difficult times through which your predecessors ever passed, while the ancient parliamentary constitution remained, were calm weather and smooth water compared with those that await your Majesty, under the new dispensation, and the perils with which that dispensation necessarily compasses you round about. There was but one course for the enemies of reform—the course of the quick-sighted Mr. Canning, the course of the far-sighted Duke of Wellington—it was to resist every change ; to consider the old constitution as a given quantity, one of the immoveable data, one of the fixed conditions, upon which our whole reasonings were to be conducted ; by which the solution of our political problem was to be sought. They might be quite wrong in refusing all reform ; but they were quite consistent.

Their task might be very difficult, to resist all inroads upon the citadel of old abuse and antiquated absurdity, and give battle in advance of its outworks; but it was far more easy than to surrender all those outworks and much of the interior, and then to fight for the centre, the most time-worn and weakest of the whole. It was not very easy to maintain the position, that the people had nothing at all to do with the laws but to obey them, with the taxes but to pay them, with the conduct of the executive but to suffer by it, with the nomination of the legislature but to look on while it was made. This was far enough from being an easy position to defend. But, how much less easy is that in which your ministers have chosen to intrench themselves, when, having let in the people, they would maintain a vain conflict with their countless numbers; when, having avowed that the Lower House of Parliament is intended for a true representation of the community at large, they declare that the whole community shall be absolutely excluded from all share in electing it, except the trifling fraction of the people which is possessed of property to a certain amount! This is the slippery footing on which your present ministry has taken post; this is the exposed ground on which these feeble and defenceless men have chosen to contend against the country. Reformers, opposing all improvement; advocates of popular rights, contending against the whole privileges of the people; enemies of the aristocracy, that loathes, if possible, as much as it scorns them, yet sacrificing themselves in fighting against their own natural allies, the multitude upon whom that aristocracy

would trample ; as individuals, feeble to a byword ; as a party, weak to a laughing-stock ; as a government, compared with whom, it has truly been said, Mr. Addington's and Richard Cromwell's were vigorous and secure ; yet rejecting all aid from the only quarter to which they can look for succour ; utterly without the chance of any help to save them, any accident to ward off their destruction, except the restored confidence of the country ; yet resolved, at all hazards, to make the breach irreparable, and to forfeit that confidence for ever !

Such is the position of your present ministers ; but also such are the ministers to whom you have, I will not say given your confidence—you have only continued to confide in them, because you chanced to find them in office at your accession. Before, however, we proceed to consider the inevitable consequence of the fatal line which they have chosen, deliberately chosen, to take, and the utter impossibility of their keeping by it, except to work their own ruin ; it is necessary to pause for a moment, at this point, because your Majesty is here concerned.

They are *your* ministers, *you* are pleased to keep them filling up all *your* offices, and constantly about *your* person. You are surrounded by them, and by their partisans of either sex, in a manner hitherto unknown to the people of this country. Downing-street, Whitehall, are no longer the resort of the cabinet. The official residences are deserted ; and one palace holds the Sovereign and the servants of the public. This novel, inconvenient, and not very seemly excess of royal favour,

is at once injurious to the public service, and personally advantageous to the ministry : for, although it must necessarily prevent them from attending to the duties of their several departments, and thus make them far worse ministers than they might, by more diligence and harder work, become ; they care mighty little for this, provided they gain a further hold over your mind, and show the country more strikingly how unbounded their influence is over your Majesty. The absolute impossibility of thus holding any communication whatever with the numberless parties who have daily claims upon their attention, is manifest. Whatever business they may transact, beyond royal promenades, and rides, and banquets, must needs be transacted in writing ; and consequently the affairs of this country are now carried on pretty much as they would be if those to whom they are intrusted were living abroad. When you return to London, some months hence, no doubt part of this serious evil might be removed ; but only part. The ministers will be in London, and we shall no longer be governed by course of post ; yet the chief among them will have their whole time divided between sleeping and attendance in your palace : no time for calm discussions ; none for careful preparation of despatches, and other state papers ; none for meditation, to inform and enlarge their views, on the great questions that occur ; none for reading, if they ever think of so vulgar an occupation. A set of men who really and truly require every kind of help to conceal, if it cannot lessen the poverty of their natures, and enable them to keep up a respectable appearance among politicians ; thus throw away all

chances of bettering their condition ; and the poorest statesmen ever seen among us, they who most wanted all the little helps to be gleaned from unremitting industry, are become also the most idle, and the least economical of their little resources.

But consider, Madam, if you please, whether all this exuberant favour is more beneficial to others than to themselves. You are identifying yourself with them in a way which your wary grandfather never dreamt of with his greatest favourites. You are delivering yourself up into their hands, far more fettered and helpless than your indolent uncle George IV., or your easy and well-natured predecessor, ever, for an instant, contemplated ; though the one was surrounded by men as dear to the aristocracy of church and state as those men are the detestation of both ; and the latter had for his ministers the chosen favourites of the people. Reflect, I do beseech you, on this position in which you are placing yourself. It is true, and you lately used expressions which prove you to be aware of it, and show your conviction, that this ministry has none other support but yourself. On you, and on you alone, their existence depends. With an overwhelming majority of the Lords against them ; with all the church and nearly all the landed interest their implacable enemies ; with a feeble and precarious balance of the Commons returned during the heyday of your accession to the crown, and their first acquisition of royal favour ; with the people altogether alienated from them, and regarding them as the main obstacles to all reform and all improvement ; where indeed shall they look for strength or

any thing like it but to you? A word from your lips, and they sink into utter insignificance; while a firm majority of both houses, that in the Commons trebled by a dissolution, would at once support the government which should succeed to their places. But all this only shows the more clearly, that upon you rests the responsibility of the existing state of things; the praise if it be for good, the blame if it be for evil.

I know well enough the lesson which you and all sovereigns have been made to learn by heart, that the king of this country has no responsibility. In one sense this is true; and, in that sense, nothing but a violation of the constitutional law, or a subversion of the dynasty, can make you responsible. In that sense, your celebrated ancestors, the first Charles and the second James, were wholly irresponsible. It required a rebellion, to make a martyr of the one; and a revolution, to make an exile of the other. But there is a sense in which you are just as responsible as the meanest of your subjects. Morally, you are responsible; and really, as things are now-a-days managed, I know none of your ministers more responsible than yourself. They may lose their places indeed; so far your condition is less precarious than theirs, and depends less upon your conduct. But punishment for a bad minister, or, which is the same thing, for a man who has no kind of talents except to be an agreeable member of society, and who chooses to play at being minister because he finds (he says) the excitement of it pleasant; for the public guilt of such a man there is no punishment, by the modern practice of our government, beyond that to which kings are as

liable as their servants,—the hatred and the scorn of the country. If the just demands of your people shall be disregarded ; if their lawful rights shall still be withholden from them ; if the men who have abandoned all their principles, forfeited every pledge, truckled to each adversary in proportion as he was wrong and strong ; deserted each friend who preferred being in the right to being in their good graces ;—if these men shall still be suffered to rule the country in *your* name, and in *your* name to obstruct the progress of general improvement, then, Madam, be you well assured that a day of reckoning will soon come, in which you, and not they, will have to stand the scrutiny of four-and-twenty millions of people, resolved to make their pleasure known, and to speak very plainly their whole mind upon *your* conduct. It is not very safe for a whig ministry to turn their backs upon the country, and seek only the favour of the court. It is somewhat new and strange for a popular party to be in opposition to the people, and to hang, for their whole support, by the frail thread of royal favour. That the doom of such a government is sealed, no one can doubt ; that it can only be averted by a speedy, a sudden, an entire repentance and amendment of life, is absolutely certain. But *you*, Madam, are any thing rather than a mere spectator of all this unprecedented scene. There is one act for which you and all sovereigns are amenable : of choosing the Ministers, the sole and undivided responsibility rests upon the Sovereign. In that act there can be no adviser responsible in any sense that is intelligible to plain understandings. Lawyers may quibble ; the metaphysicians

of politics may subtilize ; the transcendental doctors of our constitution may refine, and try to persuade us of what they themselves cannot comprehend,—that the man who takes the office which his sovereign tenders him is the responsible adviser of the offer thus made. No person of ordinary straight-forward understanding ever will bring his faculties to put any reliance upon such a fiction. Its want of all foundation in fact is obvious to the meanest capacity. So far it resembles the fictions in which the law delights. But it is not only unfounded in truth ; it is contrary to the plain truth, nay, to the possibility of truth ; and he who can believe or imagine that any person is amenable for another's resolving to send for him and employ him, may next understand how Baron Trenck could fall into a pit, and then run home for a ladder to clamber out of it. Believe me, whatever those subtle doctors may say, the bulk of mankind look to the SOVEREIGN, and to the SOVEREIGN alone, as the party responsible for the choice of the minister.

But there are far more important interests at stake than the fate of a ministry ; or, permit me respectfully to say it, the fate of a monarch ; else I should not have given myself the trouble of writing these pages. The best interests of this country are involved in the misconduct of the government, and in the confidence which you continue to give it. My hopes are indeed slender that they will retrace their steps, and once more deserve the people's favour. My prayer is, that the people's steady determination may attain the people's fixed purpose, without any shock to the public peace.

No reflecting man can doubt that, after the change, which I have termed in accordance with the fact the revolution of 1832, a new conduct of the government became a mere matter of course. Little knots of politicians, courtiers of St. James's, or of Devonshire House, or Apsley House, or Holland House, could no longer expect to settle, in their more select meetings, the affairs of this great empire. Above all, there was an end of the absurd notion, that it signifies not how the House of Commons may be chosen. The people were now acknowledged to be the electors of their representatives; and the function of those representatives was declared to be, speaking the sense of the community at large. Then, if such be now the admitted origin, and such the avowed use of the Lower House, what shall be said of the arrangement by which a mere handful of persons are alone consulted in the selection of the members? How can any one, who maintained the necessity of giving the people a choice in the government of their country, affect to believe that it is enough if this share be conveyed to a few, all the rest being excluded; to thirty thousand men, for instance, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, there being above three hundred thousand in that district; and still more, if precisely the same share in the legislature is enjoyed by a place having two hundred or three hundred voters, and by a province having between twenty thousand and thirty thousand? Can any distribution of political influence be more revolting to common sense, than that which awards to a paltry town like Harwich precisely the same share with London or Westminster, or the West Riding of York-

shire ; giving to five thousand or six thousand persons the self-same voice in the conduct of public affairs with a million ? Or, if we view the absurdity in its larger scale, by taking aggregates instead of individual anomalies ; what defence shall be made for a system which gives to fifteen boroughs, whose inhabitants are short of one hundred thousand, as many representatives, and as much direct power in the legislature, as all Middlesex, Yorkshire, and Lancashire, with their six millions of people and their countless resources of industry and wealth and skill ?

We hear it indeed often said that, though in statements this gross absurdity cannot be denied, yet practically no harm is done ; for the result is a reasonably good body of men being returned, while the indirect weight of the larger places bears some proportion to their superior importance. Never was there a more perilous topic of defence than this, for parliamentary reformers. It is the very doctrine of the Canning party ; it is their defence of the antiquated and exploded system ; it is the old story of “virtual representation” and “the system works well ;” it is a defence of the constitution we destroyed in 1832 ; and, if good for anything, it is good to prove that we never should have pulled the old building down and raised the new one upon its ruins. They who used this argument before 1832 were consistent and logical in their reasoning ; but that those who held all virtual representation cheap, and insisted upon real, should go back and argue so, is utterly inconceivable. Mr. Canning besought us not to pull down the old House about our

heads ; because, though it could not hold above a tenth part of the family, and exposed those few to wet and cold, we could make a shift to crowd the whole in, and to get some little shelter when there should chance to be neither cold, nor rain, nor wind. We laughed at him, and said that the use of a house was to hold the owner's family, and to shelter them in bad weather. So, to work we went ; down came the old walls ; roof there was hardly any to remove. Well, we have built a new one, which looks better at a distance, but holds nothing like half the family, and gives them only shelter when the wind is in one quarter. Shall we be suffered to say, "Don't put a roof on ; by no means throw out a wing or offices ; for after all, by crowding, we can make a shift : and the wind is in the right quarter a whole week in every year ?" The answer is — "Why was not this found out before our old house was taken down, and the expense incurred of a new building—all incurred for nothing ; no one benefit having accrued, but removing one bad house to put another bad house in its place ?"

That the adversaries of reform have now gained a complete victory, all must allow. They see the whole fruits of the change, so much dreaded by them, blighted in the blossom ; they find their opponents ranged on the same side with themselves, and eager to prop up every abuse by the very same means themselves had in vain attempted to employ for the obstruction of all improvement. They find that any risk of the people gaining their due weight in the government is chimerical, as long as the reform ministry, or rather the poor

remains of the reform ministry, hold the reins of government ; and they feel confident that no other liberal party will, for ages to come, be possessed of power to improve and to annoy.

I beg it may only be recollected, how very large a proportion of all the arguments ever used with effect to subvert the old parliamentary system, are precisely those to which I have been adverting. What was the reason which made all men feel the rotten boroughs to be wholly untenable ? Was it not that there is a gross absurdity in five or six hundred persons electing a hundred members, while as many hundred thousand elect none at all ? But wherein does this differ from the absurdity of fifteen thousand electing one hundred members, while four or five millions have not amongst them the fraction of a vote ? The old system was condemned, because seven petty burghs chose as many members as all Middlesex, town and country, together with the counties of York and Lancaster. Is this outrage on common sense much diminished, when, instead of seven petty burghs, the same thing must now be affirmed of fifteen ? The old system was ridiculed, and has been exploded, because units of the population had as great weight in naming the representatives of the whole community, as hundreds of thousands. Have we gained very much, in our progress towards making this scheme rational, by substituting tens for units ? It is quite true, that we have no longer the spectacle, so repugnant to all principle, of a single rich man naming, at his will and pleasure, to indulge a caprice or pocket a price, the persons who shall represent a town. But

have we excluded the possibility of another sight as much sinning against all principle, and opening as wide a door to the silly freaks of caprice, and the sordid speculations of avarice—that of a man using his purse to sway a few scores of voters, or his influence to overawe them? Is not this a fully worse traffic, in a moral point of view, besides being disgustingly covered over with hypocritical pretexts? Has it not just as corrupting an operation upon those whose consciences it violates? Does it not tend as directly to put undue power in hands likely to abuse it? Assuredly, had Mr. Canning or Mr. Huskisson survived to see their party placed in the cross-fire which they have now to sustain, from the real reformers on the one flank, and the equally consistent enemies of all reform on the other, we may conceive with what glee they would have undertaken the easy task of exposing the utter inefficiency of the reform, should it stop here; inefficiency for all other purposes except to uncover the nakedness of the system which acts upon certain principles, up to a certain point; and then abandons them, to adopt their contraries, and make a result as incongruous as any impossible monster that ever was created by a wild imagination.

But the gross absurdities of the old system were not the only causes of its downfall. It sinned against all the principles which ought to regulate the conduct of the government towards the people. Not only had their number multiplied, but their resources had been incalculably increased. Hamlets had become cities, and barren heaths were covered with villages and towns.

The progress of information had even outstripped that of wealth and numbers. All had acquired some knowledge; and, above all, political knowledge was universally diffused. To treat a people so enlightened as their ignorant ancestors had been treated, was plainly impossible. Is it much more possible to treat the multitudes of well-educated men like children or like slaves, now that they know still more, and take a still greater interest than ever in the management of their affairs? If it was vain to think of keeping the youth in the pupillary state of a child, is the plan more hopeful of keeping down the full energies of man's estate? If the attempt was desperate, to cut off the people from tasting the draught of power, is the effort very likely to succeed, which is now making, to dash from their lips the cup already quaffed? Be assured, Madam, that it was more rational by far to resolve, and easier by far to effect, the entire exclusion of the British people from all concern in the government, than to arrest them in assuming their full share, after you have voluntarily given them an instalment. We have given them the more eager desire to possess their rights, the more perfect capacity to enjoy them, and the more powerful arm to grasp them. To stop short now may endanger *ourselves*, but never can stay *them* in their course.

The vast improvement of any place in numbers and in wealth, was always reckoned the best title it could show to return members; and the exclusion of towns like Birmingham, Manchester, and Sheffield, which had grown up from villages or old manor-houses into cities of the first order, was deemed, and justly deemed, the

very worst part of the old system ; nay the ruin of that system was begun by a refusal to let in those towns, a refusal which even the Canning party said they could not stomach. What then shall be said of a system which sees whole bodies of men improved in all the qualities that can make them most worthy of the elective franchise ; in morals, industry, knowledge, independence of character, respectability both of station and of conduct ; and yet rigorously excludes them from the whole privileges of the constitution ; while it admits the dissolute, the mean, the base, the time-serving ; even the poor, merely because they rent a pig-sty, instead of boarding in a respectable family ?

But we are told that the mal-administration of the public affairs hurried on the old constitution to its ruin ; that laws were maintained under it, so barbarous in their structure as no enlightened community could submit to ; that abuses were upheld which outraged the whole feelings of mankind, and which no real representation of the people could ever have endured. What think you, then, of the popular representation, which has tamely endured the maintenance of laws to starve the people, by making the bread half as dear again as it ought to be ; to sink them in discomfort, by making the worst building timber dearer than they should pay for the best ; and to shut against us the markets of the European continent ? Is it possible to conceive that, if the House of Commons were really chosen by the people at large, such laws as these would be allowed to survive a single session ?

The inconsistencies in the distribution of the franchise

were the main cause of the downfall of the Borough Parliament; and the plan of the Reform Bill recognised the right of towns, and also of counties, to return members according to the number of their inhabitants. But was there ever any thing so inconsistent with this avowed principle of the measure, as the method taken to work it out in detail? While a town like Dudley or Wakefield was allowed but one member, because of its size being less than others to which two were given; many of the small towns were retained, merely because they formerly returned members (an argument that would have justified the retention of Old Sarum itself); and then although, as far as the difference between ten thousand and twenty thousand inhabitants was concerned, population might be the test; the moment that magical number was passed, the population of men was no more regarded than that of dogs and cats. Lancaster was allowed two, Wakefield but one; because the former had fifteen thousand, the latter not ten thousand inhabitants; and then, upon the same principle, I suppose, Lancaster with its fifteen thousand was allowed as many representatives as Manchester with its one hundred and fifty thousand, and Glasgow with its two hundred thousand!

But the worst part of all the plan was, the taking a ten-pound house as the criterion of respectable station. Wealth may certainly be generally assumed as attended with education and independence; and when all you want is some test, some outward and visible sign, of these important qualifications for the exercise of political functions, sufficient wealth to ensure them may be

assumed as the standard. But the bill took so low an estimate as formed no test at all ; and it took the ownership or occupancy of a building as the criterion of that wealth ; so that it both comprehended persons as having sufficient wealth who were almost penniless, and excluded those whose means were much larger ; while it also fixed even the scale of wealth so low (supposing you could get at it by the rate of house-rent), that multitudes of dependent creatures were made sharers of the legislative power, while other multitudes of men among the most independent and respectable of the whole community were deprived of all voice whatever in the conduct of public affairs. All, therefore, is wrong in this provision. The test of respectability is wrong ; for wealth so slender as the bill contemplates proves nothing as to respectability. But the test of even that low degree of wealth is wrong ; for renting a house proves nothing as to wealth. A false measure of a wrong unit is assumed for the standard : as if the Horse Guards authorities were to order that no man should be enlisted who was under five feet ten inches, and to furnish the recruiting-serjeants each with a foot measure of a different length. A very motley group of men would be raised, but not half so motley as our ten-pound electors.

I must beseech your best attention, Madam, to this important consideration, and beg of you to reflect for a moment upon the class of persons whom the present system excludes from all share in the choice of their representatives. It might seem enough to say at once, in order to make us pause, “ All the labouring classes of

the community are shut out ; all those upon the strength of whose arms our realms depend for their defence in war ; all those upon the work of whose hands your people depend for food, for raiment, for lodging.” All are treated like the cattle upon the soil they till, or like the serfs upon those foreign soils, whose produce we are not suffered to purchase, in order that the country gentlemen, the lilies “ which neither sow nor spin,” may have larger nominal incomes than they could appear to enjoy, were bread sold at its natural value. But so much for justice ; what says prudence, a monitor often listened to by the ears that justice finds deaf ? Those men, the labouring population of the country, the disfranchised classes, are to be counted by millions, while the privileged body is to be numbered by thousands. How long will the many suffer themselves to be governed and despised by the few ? If, however, I am told that men may be stout of heart and strong of arm, without having the head required to consult on state affairs, and choose those who can best consult for them, my answer is twofold : *First*, I am confident little learning is required to teach men what measures, of peace, of freedom, of justice, of tolerance, are most deserving of support ; what laws are wanted for relieving us of heavy burdens, for reducing the unequal pressure of those which are indispensable ; for promoting and protecting industry, by removing obstacles to our trade at home and abroad ; what men of independent station and character, of honest and plain minds, of clear manly understandings, and of good, moral, and religious repute, are most worthy of trust, and best calculated to join in making or in mend-

ing our laws. The qualification which an elector wants the most of all is independence of other men—having a will of his own—freedom from corrupt feelings—resolution to think for himself. If the farm labourers and cottagers are too much under the dominion of their employers (and I am inclined to think that the ballot would not prevent them from following blindly, but voluntarily their landlord's course), this is no reason why the countless myriads of workmen in our towns should not be both enfranchised, by an extension of the suffrage, and protected from all undue influence in the exercise of it.

My second answer then to the proposed objection is this:—The workmen in the towns are, without any doubt and with hardly any exception, fully qualified to exercise the franchise; and, generally speaking, they are incomparably fitter to be intrusted with it than the small shopkeepers, let me say, than any shopkeepers whom it has been my lot to know. Their intelligence is great, and it is daily increasing. Their information upon political subjects is not exceeded by that of any rank in the community. Many classes, and most numerous classes of these, are persons of extraordinary skill in difficult crafts; many unite a refined taste with expert manual dexterity; many work at things which require great scientific knowledge. Think only of the outrageous folly of a test which allows the most ignorant creature that ever walked upon two legs, to vote, because he rents a small hovel, and which no book, or pamphlet, or penny magazine, or even weekly paper, ever entered; and excludes from all voice, at all

elections, whether municipal or parliamentary, a journeyman optician, whose lodgings are filled with mathematical instruments and works of natural philosophy, and who occupies his leisure hours in studying the discourses of Newton and Laplace. But, again I say, independence is more valuable than even knowledge; which, politically considered, is chiefly valuable because it makes a man think for himself, and scorn the dictation of a master, and spurn at the bribes of a candidate. Are the ten-pound shopkeepers men who scorn dictation and spurn at bribes? Are they, the smooth-tongued simpering creatures of the counter and the till, men to think for themselves, and disregard the frowns of a customer? Nay, suppose them protected by the ballot, are their hearts independent? On the contrary, I am fully persuaded, that there is no class in the community more thoroughly the slaves of low grovelling prejudices; more truckling to their superiors, of course more insolent to those below them, more bent upon rising to the levels above them, more anxious to increase the interval that separates them from those beneath. They are, according to all my observation of men, the most aristocratic in their propensities of the whole community. In a lord's presence they stand not upright; a lady's carriage at their door, sets their heart a-fluttering. To ape the worst fashions of the silliest portions of mankind, is their delight. To live a little as they do, whose pecuniary difficulties arising from such extravagances they know full well, and to their cost, is the chiefest object of their exertions; and in pursuit of it they often land in the Gazette.

While the honest journeyman is toiling to earn his livelihood, eager to improve his mind, faring hard, and rising early to give his children a better education than he had himself; these small gentry of the shop are keeping their children as ignorant as themselves, in order that they may be mistaken for "gentlefolks" when they go to guttle and guzzle at their shabby villas; which, mean as they are, they cannot afford to keep; while their thoughts and those of their females are running upon "*them there things as the quality does.*" The present system *judiciously* intrusts the franchise to this class, by the thousand; while not a journeyman has it. But there are not any men in the whole world more truly independent than the journeymen. As they are well informed and skilful, sober and industrious, so are they free. The slaves of no low vanity which makes men in easy circumstances poor by making factitious wants beyond their means, they have enough to support them, and not enough to pamper and spoil. A good workman is to the full as independent of his master as the master is of him; in many crafts, a great deal more so. Among those men you never hear any demand for the ballot. No; they demand the right to vote! Give them *that*, and they will exercise it, like men, in the face of day; and leave the little shopkeeper, smirking behind the counter when my lady condescendingly steps in, to sneak behind the ballot-box, when my lord is pleased to command his vote—or his account. Yes! these men, the ornament, the pride, and the glory of their country, are not suffered to choose her parliament; and are condemned to

political annihilation. Those men, whose exquisite skill and admirable dexterity carries the fame of your arts into every sea that a ship can plough, teaches envy to the proudest of your rivals, and inculcates admiration almost to worshipping, on every tribe, however remote, as soon as its existence is known—whose miraculous industry maintains a struggle against all disadvantages of climate and of soil with the most favoured nations of the earth ; nay, even bears up against the intolerable burdens which representatives, they never had any choice in choosing, have laid upon them : these men, from whom our whole capacity of continuing the government is derived, who nourish our commerce, who supply our revenue, whose genius and whose toil are necessary to our existence—are treated as if they were beasts of burden ; and never are suffered to interfere in the management of those public affairs which, but for them, would be hurled into instant confusion and destruction ! These are they who now demand, not the ballot, but the FRANCHISE ; and the FRANCHISE they must, they will, they shall have !

Madam, have a care ! Have YOU a care ! I beseech YOU, have a care ! This question cannot, it must not, be trifled with ! You have ministers whose incredible folly it is to fancy, because you are for them, they may turn round, against all their pledges, upon the people. Those ministers have been supported, when the court frowned upon them ; partly from the reluctance of many friends to risk a tory government, partly by the Irish members, under the direction of an individual. As long as they were ill at court, they affected a care for reform, and stood by their promises to Ireland. No

sooner had you thrown yourself, bound hand and foot, into their power, than they declared that they no longer regarded either reform or Ireland. Still, the reformers, though sorely vexed, though justly indignant, have not wholly arrayed themselves against them; and even the Irish have, for a moment, refused to give them up. But read the signs of the times, and you must perceive that the reformers of every class are now about to oppose your government; while Mr. O'Connell finds that he can no longer venture to draw upon the credulity of the most simple and credulous people in the world. The corporators all over the country are busily shutting their eyes to a conduct which they know they must reprobate if they durst look at it; but they have their little jobs to do, and that requires government patronage; they have their little petty vanity and self-importance to gratify, and that requires to seem well with the ministry. Be assured that this is seen through and through by the people, who despise Mr. Mayor and the worthy aldermen, and have found them out to be tories in whig clothes. Even the Irish will not give their leader this one more year, which he so piteously asks; for even the Irish are not so silly as to fancy that he expects next session to make the English Parliament, with both parties against him, let in a hundred more Irish members, to play the same kind of Irish game that the first hundred have been at for these three years past.

Therefore the fate of your present ministry is sealed. But the struggle to displace it will shake other powers than those of Downing-street. If you be your father's daughter, and your uncle's niece, you are not made of

very yielding materials. Besides, you are young, and quite without experience. The indolent careless individual who (with the help of his Canning-school companions) governs you as entirely as he leaves parliament and the country to govern themselves, no doubt tells you—"It is all nothing, all a fancy, all a dream; nothing in it, nothing at all." He has an unusual contempt for all opinions, all doctrines—this he mistakes for being practical; indeed, for all subjects whatever—which he thinks is profound; nay, for all men, not even excepting himself—which he fancies is sagacious and enlarged. Of course he laughs at the people, and laughs much at their leaders; forgetting that men may be very respectable who, by mere accident, are following contemptible-enough leaders—as truly the present fortunes of the ministerial party might easily have taught him, had he really known as much as he pretends of the maxim which, in old times, was said to come down from heaven: forgetting, too, that the difficulty in great popular movements is not to find good leaders, but numerous followers, and that the former may very swiftly be changed when the latter are quite ready. As his constant maxim seems to have been, both personally and officially, "*Anything for a quiet life*," doubtless he has inculcated the same seductive and perilous doctrine upon his young mistress; and it would be wise and well, if all she had to trouble her repose, were the question, who should be asked to dinner, or who to dance? or if all the occupations of her station were, to do what her ministers seem resolved she shall wear out her life in performing—endless

entertainments, constant amusements, everlasting parties, unceasing exhibition, and perpetual locomotion. But, Madam, if your whole duties consisted in these things, we might have them all performed just as well at a much lower rate. I will not say, with Thomas Paine, that “an able-bodied man might be easily got to do the work of king for five hundred a year;” but assuredly a great saving might be made upon our royal establishment, if at the head of it there were not placed a great functionary, whose services require such a rare union of talent and judgment with firmness and with virtue, that I conscientiously believe it is hardly possible to pay for it too highly. But then we *do* pay very dear for it; and we must have something like it, or we are cheated. If, then, the maxim of “*Anything for an easy life*” is to rule the sovereign, as it does the ministry, the people must have their share of it too; and, believe me, Madam, there is nothing that would more tend to give them an easy life than a cheaper government. This is a doctrine which your ministers of course will laugh at. They can only lose their places. Nay, the same men who, to serve King William, gave up all enmity to reform; and, when they had got all they could by being reformers, to serve your Majesty, gave up reform itself,—how do I know that they would not, to serve the people, give up all enmity to a commonwealth, as soon as they saw such a change inevitable? They assuredly never defended monarchy more stoutly than they did rotten boroughs; and, to tear them from Windsor, would take no greater wrench than it did to sever them from Old Sarum.

But YOUR situation is somewhat different; and it behoves you, in common prudence, to look well about you; to contemplate the prospect of the future, and the aspect of the past times. Being, upon the whole, and in the present state of society in this country, friendly to monarchy, (I speak no extravagant, no courtly language, but I go as far as I can,) I am exceedingly averse to any change. I believe that in YOUR present fate is involved the peace and prosperity of the country. Your silly courtiers will affect to call this a scanty measure of loyalty. Mind them not. They who hold this moderate and rational language will be found standing by you, with pen and tongue and sword, when that vile and false generation have been scattered to the wind by the echo of the first cheer which the multitude will give upon the first battalion refusing to fire on them; aye, and standing by you when it is no "*easy life*" to do so, and when the great patron of the "*easy*" doctrine, and the agreeable exemplar of the "*free and easy*," will be roaring out peals of laughter at the romantic folly of those who go against the grain, cling to monarchy now that it is out of season; and display an ardent affection for your person, after the imbecility of your advisers has stripped you of a crown!

The experiment has been twice tried, in cabinet-making, of a ministry excluding all the men of all parties who possess and deserve the nation's confidence. First, Mr. Addington failed in it, at the beginning of this century, and retired from the attempt with discomfiture and a nickname. The second experiment of this sort is now pretty plainly drawing near its natural close;

and then will begin an experiment in constitution-making of a far more important kind, which has also once before been tried and failed,—that of a government founded on popular principles, and excluding the great body of the people from all share in the conduct of it. I venture fearlessly to affirm, that, if it was found nearly impossible in 1832 to keep out the whole people from their share of power, it will be now found absolutely impossible, after letting in the few, to exclude the many ; and that whatever was done at the former period will be found to make the conflict which now awaits us incalculably more desperate. The most numerous class of the community, the most industrious, the most skillful, the creators of all wealth, and payers of almost all taxes, nay, themselves in the aggregate by far the richest class in the country, will not, you may be well assured, much longer suffer a state of things to continue, which gives to the other, smaller, weaker, poorer class, the whole legislation, the whole government, and the whole expenditure of the state. Sooner or later, that is to say, a year or two sooner or a year or two later, admitted they must and will be within the pale of the constitution.

But it is of the greatest possible importance that this admission should be soon, not late ; and it is of unspeakable importance to the monarchy and to your Majesty. I will tell you very plainly why. All the interval that may elapse before this consummation, how think you it is to be employed ? I mean, employed by the excluded classes. In preparing to obtain admission ? In combining to make their way good ? In knocking at the

door of the constitution? In pressing against the door till they force their way? No such thing. They will prepare, they will combine, they will knock, they will press—no doubt of it—as men are wont to do, who find the door of their own house barred against them. But they will also, as such men are very apt to do, pass the time they are kept outside in asking what those knaves are doing within; and not merely in such awkward inquiries, but in somewhat angry exclamations; and, I fear, even in somewhat steady resolutions to make those change places with them, who have kept the door of their house shut in their face. Depend upon it, Madam, such will be the occupation of your people, while you continue to keep them out. A constant, vigorous, unsparing scrutiny of all the parts of our system is beginning—a close examination of all its defects is undertaken. But this inquiry will go much farther, if the time is prolonged. Account, an accurate account, will be taken of the expenses of monarchical government. Every particular will be canvassed, to ascertain its necessity; every item brought forward, to get at the amount. The money expenses of kings, and queens, and courts, and palaces, will be much dwelt upon. But though that is great indeed, the other charges which the system entails are far more heavy, and will be regarded with a more envious eye. Republics have their extravagances as well as kingdoms: and public bodies are not always so economical in great matters as the ministers of princes, though in lesser matters they never are so offensively extravagant. But republics have none of those appendages which the

people have learned absolutely to hate, and which a more narrow sifting of the account will make them debit to kingly government. An insolvent aristocracy; an intolerant hierarchy; a vexatious administration of the law; mighty standing armies in peace time; numerous colonies, for purposes of patronage and corruption; bad laws, to hamper trade; unjust preferences, to oppress industry; evil customs, to discourage genius; all, all will be cast up in that fearful reckoning which the enemies of reform, professing to befriend the monarchy, will force the people to make, in settling their accounts with monarchy, and to swell their heavy bill against it. And, after all is told, the heaviest *item* of the whole will remain; the item most difficult for reason to endure; I mean the heavy price we pay for uncontested succession, in the constant risk of some foolish or wicked individual filling the first place of all, the place requiring most virtue and capacity; with the almost certainty superadded, of a princely education eradicating whatever good mere blind chance may have implanted in the august victim—sport of accidents, and prey of courts. For one man that formerly turned his mind to these fearful considerations, how many hundreds now are dreaming of nothing else? But truly those reckoners will have much to urge in behalf of their arithmetic, and of the claims to which it leads, if they are told that no middle course is open to them, between a perpetual exclusion from all share in the government under a monarchy, and an instant admission to all the powers of the state under a commonwealth.

I have given my solemn warning, as a friend both to prince and people; and most probably I have given it in vain. Where was ever the monarch whom revolt did not take by surprise? Like the deceived and dishonoured husband, the sovereign is always the last person whose eyes are opened to his position—and for the same reason; he wishes to be deceived, and all around him are ready to gratify him, by preventing the hateful truth from penetrating to his ears. Thus slumbers the monarch softly upon the collected materials of the political explosion; as the inhabitants of Vesuvius do, while the eruption is about to sweep them away. But his sleep is less pardonable than theirs, both because he always has repeated warnings, and because he is placed by Providence as a sentinel to watch over the safety of his people.

It is my firm belief, that there yet remains time for averting those evils which no friend of the present order of things can contemplate without dismay. If this time shall be spent in miserable expedients to prop up a falling system, without getting a beam from the only quarter whence sound timber is to be had—the people; if the wretched folly of the Reform Bill being final is again to be broached, as the only answer to our just demands; if the outrageous absurdity—rather let us call it the blunder, too gross for even any part of Ireland—is to be committed, of calling that bill *a final experiment*; or if, which is about as ludicrous, the self-sufficient boast is to be vapoured forth by men, mere human lawgivers, of any measure man can devise being by possibility other than experimental: then I foresee

neither comfort for your Majesty's days, nor length for your reign, nor safety for the monarchy; nor, what I value infinitely more, peace for your realm. But if the lessons of political wisdom which experience hath taught in all ages be listened to, and the courage be shown—the prudent courage be shown—of placing the government upon a broad, a secure, a popular foundation, then, knowing as I well do that no other structure ever can be stable in this land, that there is no other remedy for a state of things like the present, which actually leaves the country without any semblance of power or authority anywhere; that this hopeless impotency at home and abroad, this abnegation of all government everywhere must continue to paralyse us, let whoever will be in office, until our system is fixed upon a deep and solid popular foundation; and convinced that a building so based must defy all shocks, I look forward to your Majesty's reign, not only as perfectly safe, but unspeakably glorious; and to your people as finally rescued from all the perils that beset them.

That the *Almighty and All-wise Disposer of events*, He in whose hands are the hearts of men, may endow you with the wisdom to desire this blessed consummation, and the firmness to work for it, is the devout prayer of every real

FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE.

THE END.



